

LEARN MORE ABOUT ENERGY CONSERVATION  
AND HOME HEATING TIPS BY VISITING THESE  
HELPFUL WEB SITES.

## RESOURCES

# ON THE WEB

For tips on saving money and energy at home, access the online Energy Savers booklet at  
[http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/pdfs/energy\\_savers.pdf](http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/pdfs/energy_savers.pdf)

Learn the best ways to save energy in your home. Conduct a do-it-yourself home energy audit at  
<http://hes.lbl.gov/>

Use the Energy Star Home Energy Yardstick to compare your home's energy efficiency to similar homes across the country at [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) Click on *Explore Home Improvement*. You can also find information on energy efficient products for your home at this Web site.

For help in resolving a utility billing or service issue or to file a consumer complaint, call 1-800-292-9555 or go to [www.michigan.gov/mpsc/complaints](http://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/complaints) or write:

Michigan Public Service Commission  
Customer Intake Center  
P.O. Box 30221  
Lansing, MI 48909

## STATE SENATOR RON JELINEK

TOLL-FREE: (866) 305.2121 • WEB: [www.SenatorRonJelinek.com](http://www.SenatorRonJelinek.com)

## HEATING COSTS COULD RISE

Home heating prices are expected to be higher this winter. According to the Michigan Public Service Commission, natural gas prices are 2 percent higher than last winter; heating oil is 20 percent higher and propane prices are up 8 percent. Along with the cost of the fuel, your home heating bill also depends on the amount of fuel you use – a more energy efficient home or a warmer winter could mean lower bills.

To take a look at the online Michigan Winter 2007-08 Energy Appraisal, visit  
[www.dleg.state.mi.us/mpsc/reports/energy](http://www.dleg.state.mi.us/mpsc/reports/energy).



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HOME HEATING  
TIPS & RESOURCES



- SAVE MONEY
- MAKE YOUR HOME MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT
- GET THE MOST FROM YOUR HOME HEATING DOLLARS

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**Y**ou can take steps to help hold down home heating costs this winter while keeping your family safe and warm. By making a few changes, you can make your home more energy efficient and save money. Check these tips to get the most from your home heating dollars.

## NO - OR LOW - COST TIPS TO CONSERVE HEATING

- **Dial down.** Each degree below 72 F reduces heating use by 1 to 3 percent.
- **Caulk, seal or weather-strip leaks and cracks around windows and doors.** Reducing air leaks can save 10 percent on home energy bills.
- **Clean or replace furnace filters once a month.**
- **Clean warm - and cold - air registers** and make sure they're not blocked by furniture or curtains.
- **Check heating ducts for air leaks.**
- **Close vents and doors in unused rooms** and close damper when not using the fireplace.
- **Lower the temperature on the water heater to 120 F.** Water heating consumes 14 to 16 percent of a home energy bill.
- **Temporarily fasten clear plastic sheeting over windows** to stop drafts and help retain heat.

## SPEND TO SAVE MORE TIPS

- **Install a programmable thermostat** to automatically turn down the heat at night and when no one is home.
- **Add insulation to attic or walls if needed.** Proper insulation can save 20 percent on home heating bills.
- **Install storm windows over single pane windows** to reduce winter heat loss by 25 percent or more.
- **When replacing appliances or the heating system, consider both the purchase price and the operating cost.** The purchase price is a one-time cost, the operating cost shows up every month on the utility bill.

**I**f you are unable to pay your energy bill on time, contact your utility company as soon as possible. **DO NOT WAIT** for a shut-off notice. Qualifying seniors and low-income customers may be eligible for home heating help. In addition to these programs, the Salvation Army, local community organizations and the Veterans' Trust Fund offer payment assistance to eligible households. All programs are subject to available funds.

## ENERGY ASSISTANCE

**Winter Protection Plan:** protects qualifying seniors and low-income customers from winter shut-off. Contact the utility company.

**State Emergency Relief Program:** helps low-income households meet an immediate need for help with home heating and electricity. Contact Berrien County DHS at (269) 934-2000; Cass County DHS at (269) 445-0200; Van Buren County DHS at (269) 621-2800.

**Weatherization Assistance Program:** provides free home energy conservation services to low-income homeowners and renters. For more information contact the Weatherization Operator at the Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency at (269) 925-9077.

**Home Heating Credit:** helps eligible seniors and low income residents pay winter heating bills with a tax credit. The program runs from January to September. Access the form at <http://michigan.gov/treasury>. On the left sidebar, type in home heating credit under Search for Forms. Or call the Department of Treasury at 1-800-367-6263.

**Active Duty Shut-off Protection:** protects the family of military personnel called to full-time active duty by the president or governor from utility shut-off. Contact the utility company.

**Medical Emergency Protection:** protects customers with a qualifying medical emergency from energy shut-off. Requires written documentation from a doctor. Contact the utility company.

**The Heat and Warmth Fund (THAW):** provides assistance to low-income households and utility customers unable to pay due to an emergency. Call 1-800-866-THAW (8429).

